

Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De mixtione* XVI (On growth) – Part 2 (235.14-238.23)

PART I (PETER LAUTNER)

- 233.14-24 Summary of the Stoic view: growth requires that body goes through body
 233.24-30 Restriction of growth to living beings
 233.30-234.15 The growing thing remains the same while something is being added to it
 234.15-32 What is being added to the growing thing is either (i) incorporeal or (ii) corporeal
 19-23 - not (i)
 23-32 - therefore (ii), but not so as to imply body going through body
 234.32-235.14 The growing thing 1: the distinction between uniform and non-uniform parts
 - nutriment is added to uniform parts, whereby they grow
 - non-uniform parts grow because they are made of uniform parts that grow

PART II (PAVEL GREGORIC)

- 235.14-236.6 The growing thing 2: the distinction between its form and its matter
 - with respect to matter, the growing thing is in flux
 - with respect to form, the growing thing remains the same, so growth occurs with respect to form
 236.6-26 Proof that growth occurs with respect to form (*reductio*):
 6-14 • if growth occurred with respect to matter, then growth would require that body goes through body
 14-26 • but growth does not occur with respect to matter
 14-16 - because matter is in constant flux and there would be nothing that remains through the process of growth
 16-26 - because form preserves the identity of the growing thing through the flux
 • [implicit: Therefore, it is not required that body goes through body]
 236.26-238.10 The growing thing 3: the preservation of its characteristic shape
 236.26-237.5 - proportional growth: as one bit of nutriment is added and assimilated, it pushes forward (*proôthein*) the bit in front of it, etc.
 237.5-20 * Analogy 1 (the thought experiment): adding huge weight on one hemisphere of the Earth
 237.20-238.3 * Analogy 2: varying quantity of liquid passing through an elastic pipe
 238.10-20 The nutriment is not transformed prior to being assimilated by uniform parts
 10-17 - when the nutriment in its ultimate form (blood) gets in contact with a uniform part, it gets assimilated to that uniform part
 17-19 * Analogy 3: similar to the agency of wine on water poured into the wine
 19-20 * Analogy 4: similar to the agency of fire on combustible material close by
 238.20-23 Conclusion: the case of growth does not support the Stoic notion of body going through body

RELEVANT TEXTS:

Alexander:

De anima 32.6-38.11 (Bruns): On the nutritive faculty of the soul

Quaestio I.5, 13.9-32 (Bruns): “Why does growth occur only with respect of form, not also with respect to matter”

Aristotle:

De generatione et corruptione I.5, 320a8-322a32: On growth and diminution

De anima II.4, 415a22-416b31: On the nutritive part of the soul

De caelo II.14, 297a8-b23: On the spherical shape of the Earth

Physics IV.7, 214a32-b11: Against void: growth does not occur because something enters the voids in the growing body